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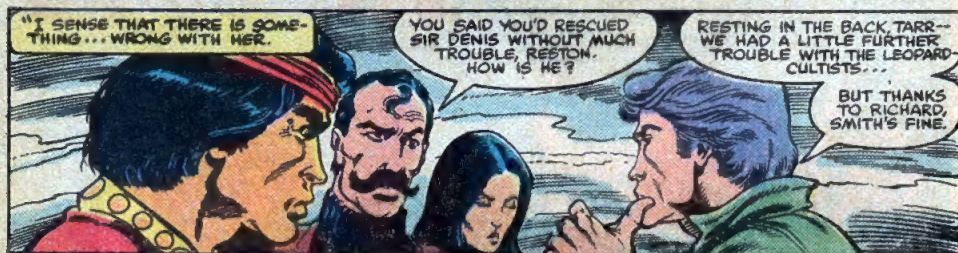
"POSING AS MIND-CONTROLLED ZOMBIES, TARR AND I BOARDED A PLANE FILLED WITH THOSE UNDER MY FATHER, FU MANCHU'S THRALL. WE THUS ESCAPED THE SOUTH AMERICAN JUNGLE TO LIMA."

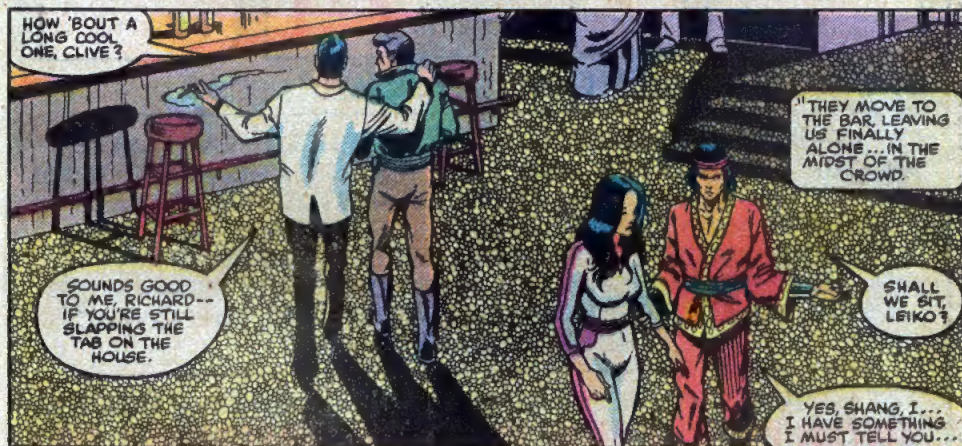
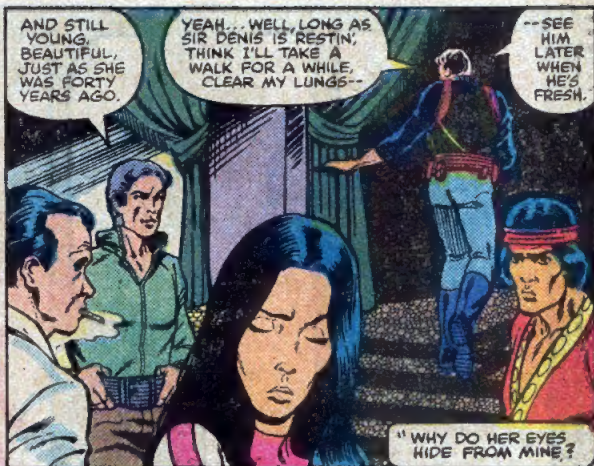
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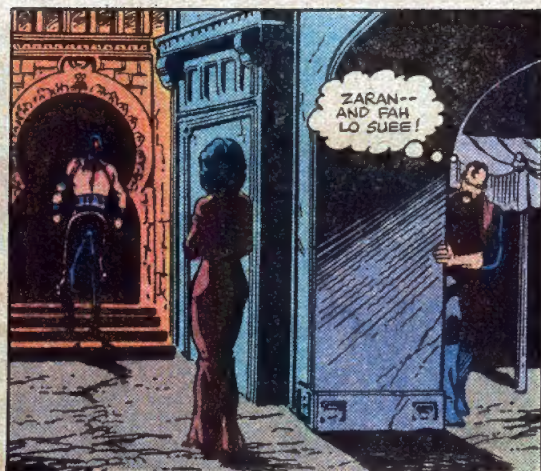
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HE HOSTED REGULAR MEETINGS WITH A NUMBER OF ENGLISH STATESMEN. ONE OF THEM WOULD BRING HIS SON, MY AGE, A BEAUTIFUL BOY WITH FEATHER-SOFT BLOND HAIR...



"WE WOULD PLAY SNAKES AND LADDERS UNDER THE TABLE WHILE OUR FATHERS DISCUSSED THE AFFAIRS OF THE WORLD. I FELL IN LOVE WITH HIM... THE KIND OF LOVE, I WAS LATER CONVINCED, THAT ONLY A 12 YEAR OLD CAN FEEL..."



THEN HIS FATHER WAS ASSIGNED CULTURAL ATTACHE TO TAIWAN, AND HE WAS GONE.

STRANGE THAT HE SHOULD GO TO CHINA AND I SHOULD REMAIN IN LONDON, BUT SUCH ARE THE AFFAIRS OF THE WORLD, AS MY FATHER SAID.

I NEVER SAW THAT BEAUTIFUL BOY AGAIN.

FOR ANOTHER 12 YEARS, I THOUGHT I FELL IN LOVE TIME AND AGAIN... BUT I NEVER FELT THAT FEELING OF THE GOLDEN RAINBOW...

BLACK JACK TARR!

YEAH, FANCY MEETIN' YOU HERE, FAH LO SUEE. YOU MUST'VE LEFT SOUTH AMERICA SAME TIME ME AND YOUR BROTHER DID. NOW WHAT'RE YA UP TO?

TRYIN' TO KIDNAP SIR DENIS AGAIN?

THEN I MET... CLIVE... AND I THOUGHT I FELT IT AGAIN, MAYBE I REALLY DID. FOR A WHILE... BUT I HADN'T YET MET YOU, SHANG.

AND... WITH YOU, THERE'S NO DOUBT, I DO FEEL THAT 12 YEAR OLD'S GOLDEN RAINBOW.

I FEEL A TRUE MAGIC.

I LOVE YOU, SHANG.

I DO!

PUT THE GUN DOWN, BLACK JACK TARR. YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND.

I UNDERSTAND, AWRIGHT, YOU TWO-FACED VIXEN.

YOU THINK I COULD FORGET HOW YOU'VE TRICKED ME TIME AND AGAIN?

NOR CAN YOU FORGET MY EYES, BLACK JACK TARR... THE SPELL OF GOLDEN DREAMS DWELLING DEEP WITHIN MY EYES...

I DON'T WANT. I... CAN'T... CAN'T... YOUR... EYES...

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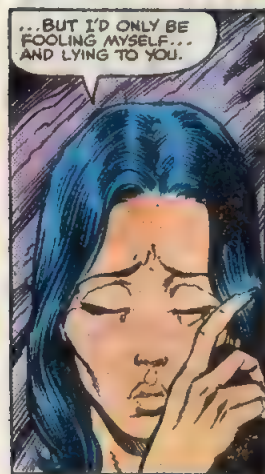
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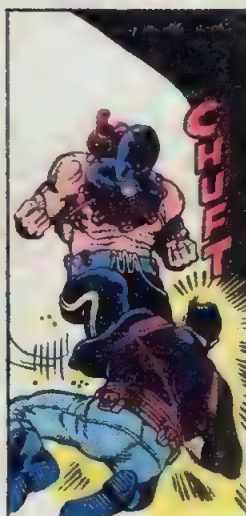
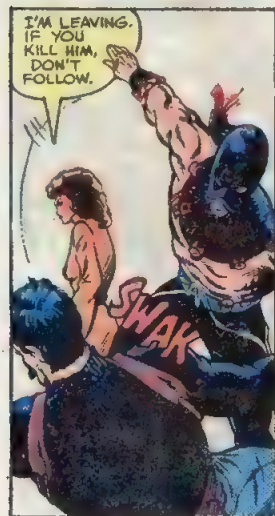
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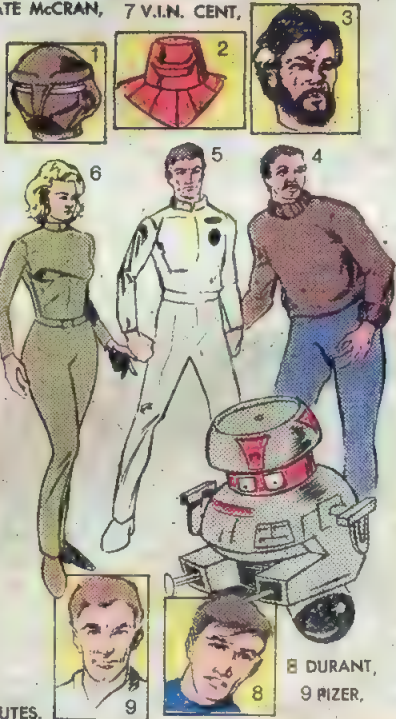
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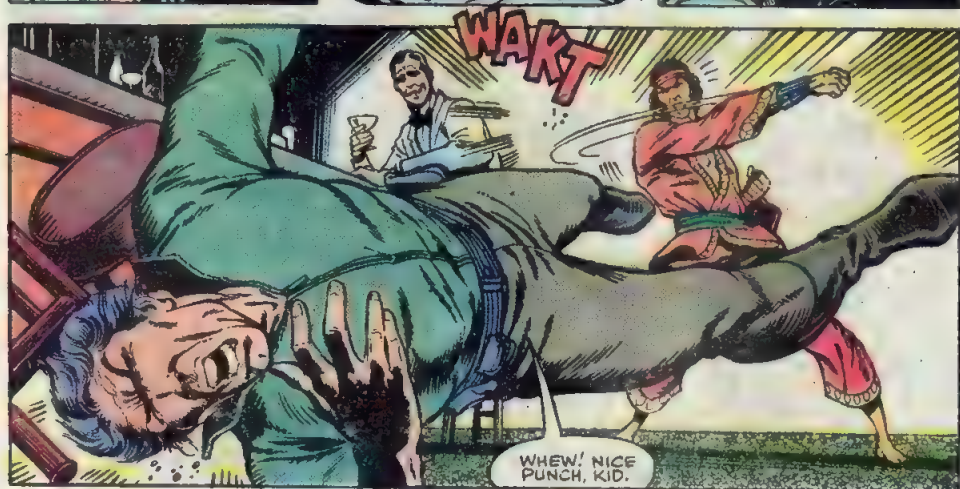
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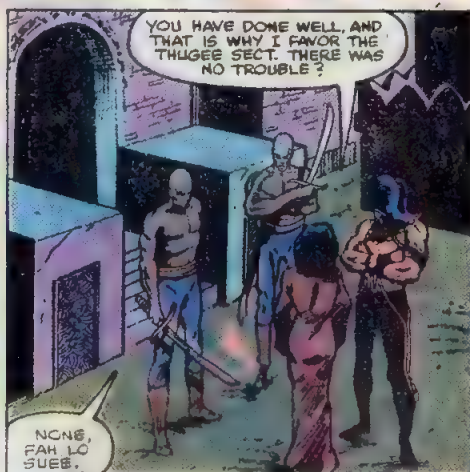
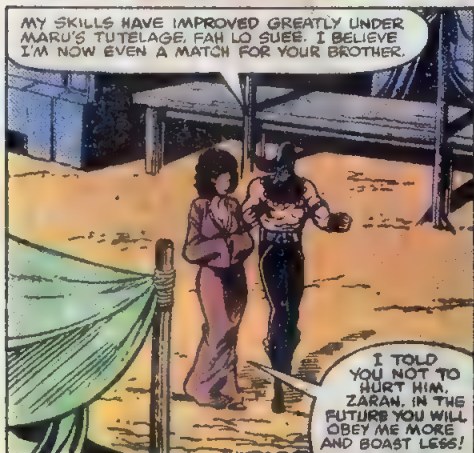
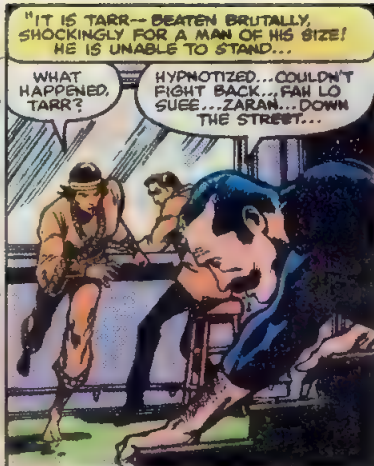
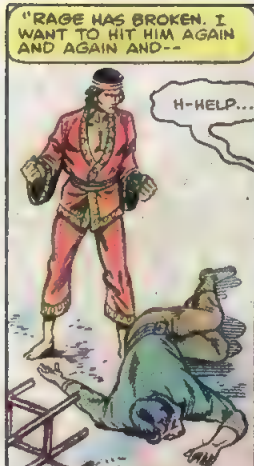
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GOOD. ZARAN HAS INSTRUCTED THE OTHERS TO MEET US HERE. THEN WE LEAVE FOR--

"NOW!"



"MY RAGE OVER RESTON'S DECEIT MUST FIND A RELEASE..."

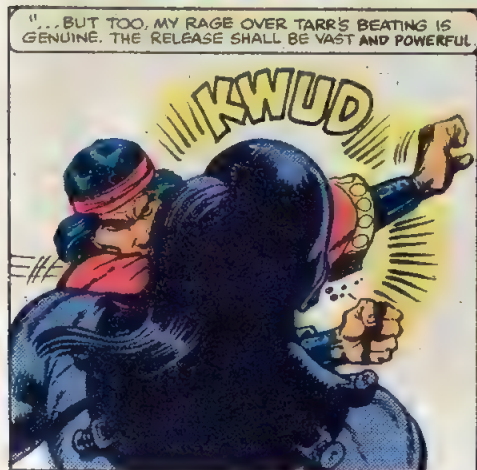


YOU WILL PAY, ZARAN, FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE TO BLACK JACK TARR.

YEAH? GUESS AGAIN, PUNK, BECAUSE I--



NO! STOP IT!! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE--

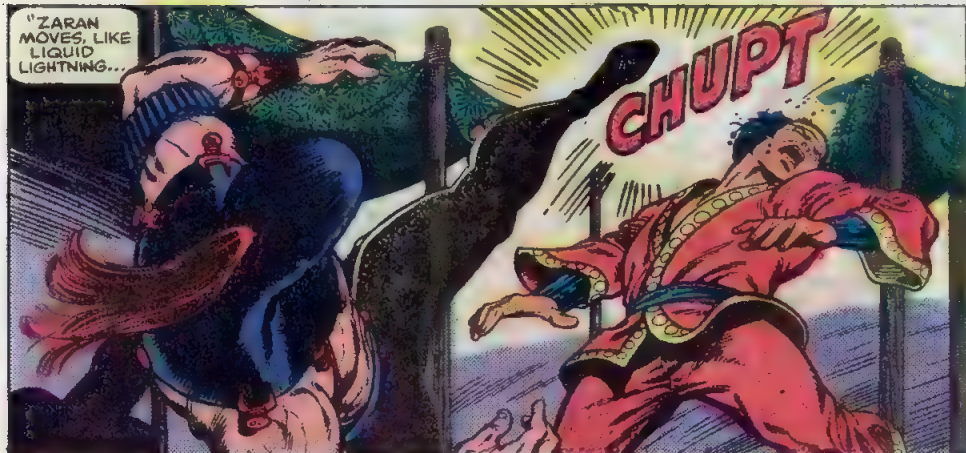


"... BUT TOO, MY RAGE OVER TARR'S BEATING IS GENUINE. THE RELEASE SHALL BE VAST AND POWERFUL.



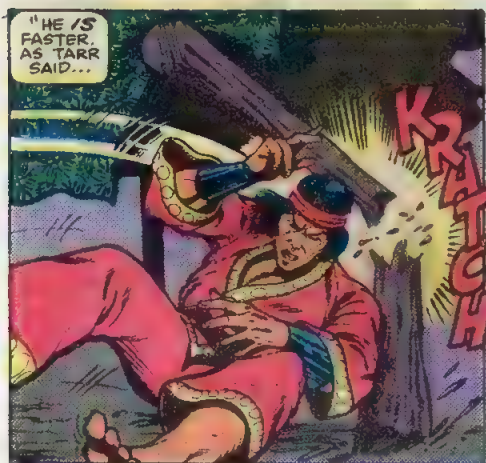
VERY WELL, LEIKO WU-- YOU HAVE LONG NEEDED A LESSON IN HUMILITY.

PERHAPS, FAH LO SUEE, BUT YOU ARE HARDLY THE ONE TO TEACH ME.



"ZARAN
MOVES LIKE
LIQUID
LIGHTNING..."

CHUPT

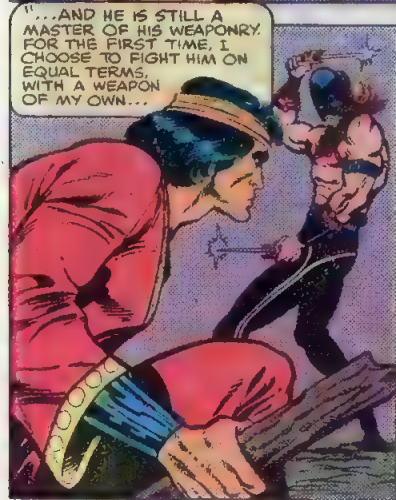


"HE IS
FASTER,
AS TARR
SAID..."

KRATCH



"HE IS
BETTER..."



"...AND HE IS STILL A
MASTER OF HIS WEAPONRY.
FOR THE FIRST TIME, I
CHOOSE TO FIGHT HIM ON
EQUAL TERMS,
WITH A WEAPON
OF MY OWN..."



"...AS THE SOUND OF OTHER WEAPONS CLASHES THROUGH
THE NIGHT."

SHANK

"LEIKO MUST
BEWARE..."

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THE PROPER STANCE.

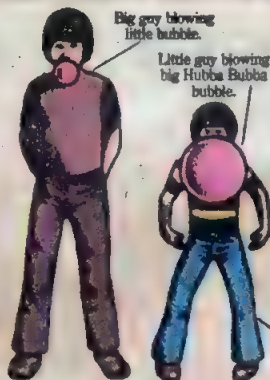


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Geographic availability may vary.

YOUR SIZE IS NOT IMPORTANT.

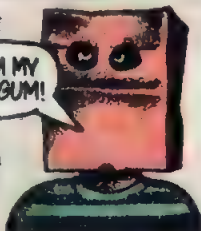
The size of your bubble is. And that means choosing the right bubble gum—Hubba Bubba. Because when it comes to great, big, fat bubbles, nothing sizes up to a Hubba Bubba bubble.



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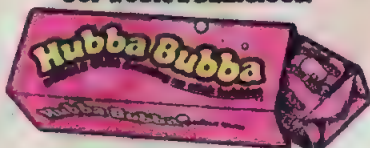
This boy did. And now instead of wearing a smile, he's wearing a paper bag over the bubble gum stuck to his face. Definitely not soft and juicy Hubba Bubba Bubble Gum. Does Hubba Bubba really work? Absolutely! Hubba Bubba is gumfighter tested and approved.

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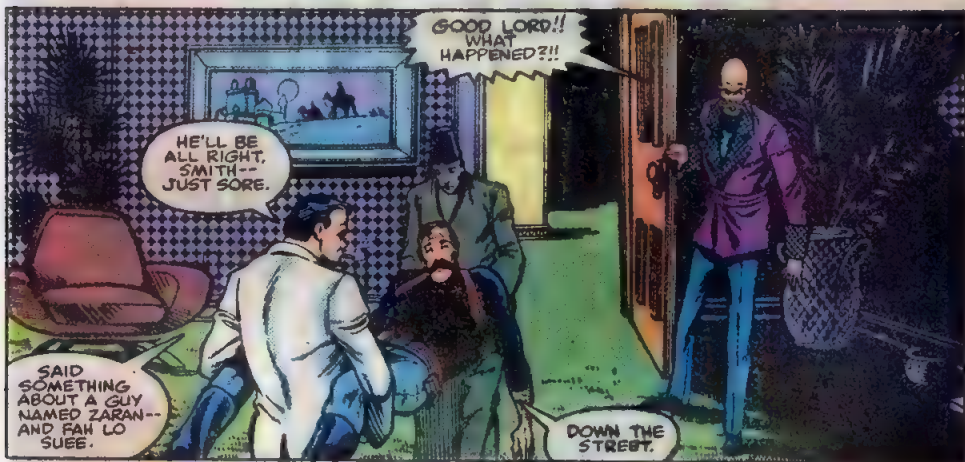


"SHE HAS TRAINED LITTLE WITH THE SWORD..."



"...WHILE MY SISTER IS A MASTER..."

"...PERHAPS EVEN THE EQUAL OF ZARAN."



HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT, SMITH-- JUST SORE.

GOOD LORD!! WHAT HAPPENED???

DOWN THE STREET.

SAID SOMETHING ABOUT A GUY NAMED ZARAN-- AND FAH LO SUEE.



"STILL, IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE--"

"--SOMEONE WHO IS THE EQUAL OF THIS NEW ZARAN."



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"I MUST BE ONE OF THEM."

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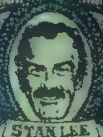
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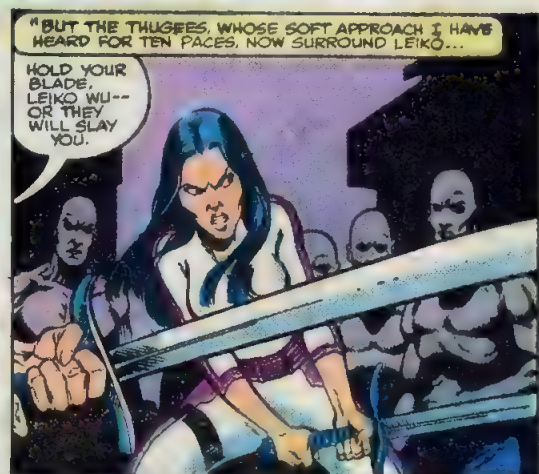
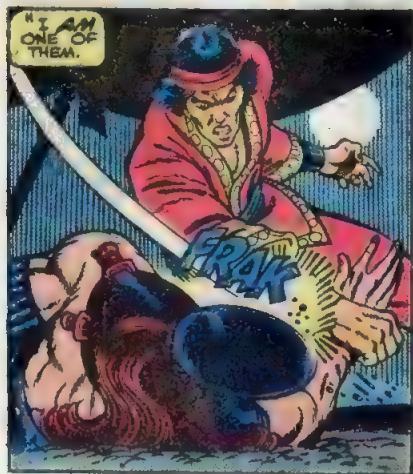
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TO ME, MY
BROTHER!

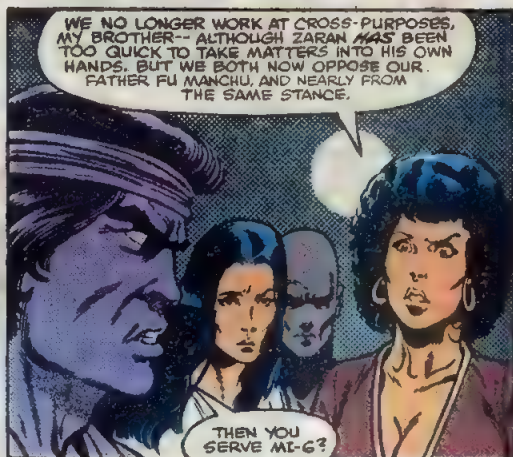
I ONCE CALLED YOU LITTLE SPIRIT,
BUT YOUR SPIRIT HAS GROWN UNTIL IT
IS NOW FIERCE AND WILD--BLIND
TO REASON!

YOU MUST BE
MADE TO SEE
THE LIGHT!



COME, CLIVE--
QUICKLY!

I... DON'T
BELIEVE IT...
CHI... HIT
ME...



WE NO LONGER WORK AT CROSS-PURPOSES,
MY BROTHER-- ALTHOUGH ZARAN ~~HAS~~ BEEN
TOO QUICK TO TAKE MATTERS INTO HIS OWN
HANDS. BUT WE BOTH NOW OPPOSE OUR
FATHER FU MANCHU, AND NEARLY FROM
THE SAME STANCE.

THEN YOU
SERVE MI-6?



MI-6 IS CONFUSED BY INTERNAL STRIFE.
I SERVE THE FUTURE MI-6-- THE
FACTION I BELIEVE WILL PREVAIL IN
THAT STRIFE. SHOULD THEY DO SO,
THEY HAVE AGREED TO HALT ALL
ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS ON
YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS.



IT WAS A CONDITION
I SET BEFORE
SERVING THEM.

AND THE
TAPE YOU
STOLE AND
DESTROYED?

IT PROVED THAT
ATTEMPTS HAD BEEN
MADE ON YOUR LIVES--
BY THE OLD
LEADERS OF MI-6...



...BUT IT WOULD HAVE DESTROYED
THE FUTURE LEADERS AS WELL.
IT HAD TO BE DESTROYED. MY
FACTION WISHES TO TAKE OVER
WITHOUT SCANDAL. IT WAS THE
CONDITION THEY SET.

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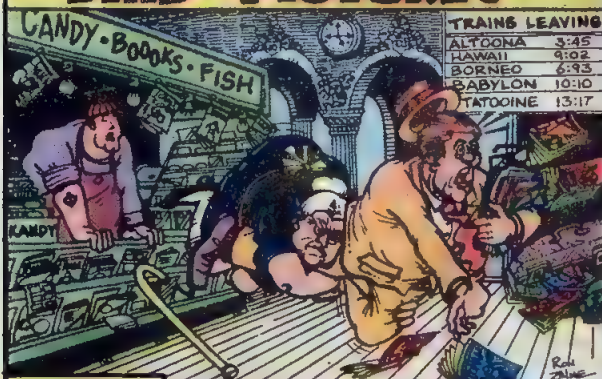
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☐ Male

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- 2) ALL THE TRAINS ARE LEAVING ON SCHEDULE. THAT MAY NOT BE WRONG, BUT IT'S CERTAINLY UNUSUAL.
- 3) THE OLD WOMAN'S 1923 PERFUME TURNED SOUR IN THE BOTTLE AND SMELLS LIKE EGG SALAD FLOATING IN GASOLINE.
- 4) THE MAN IN THE SUIT BOUGHT EVERY COPY OF MARVEL COMICS ON THE STAND! THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH THAT, BUT THE OLD WOMAN WAS THERE FIRST!

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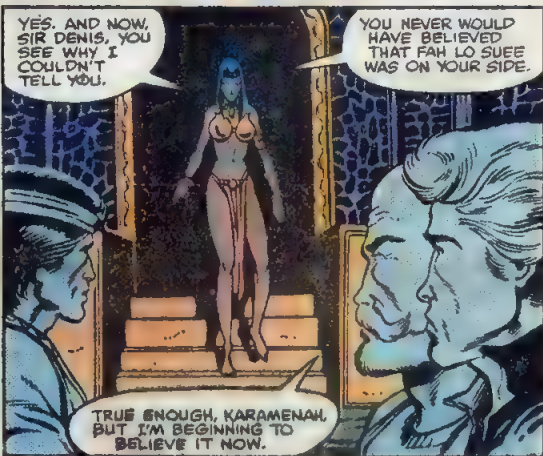
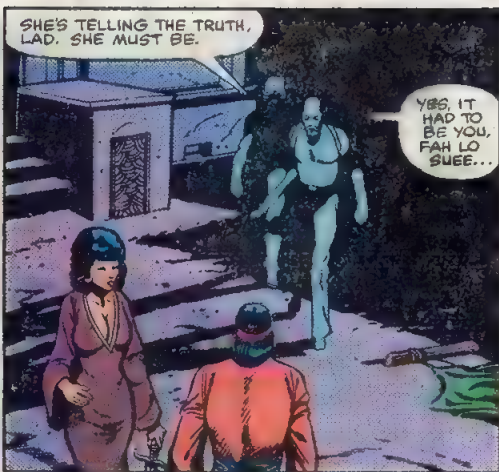
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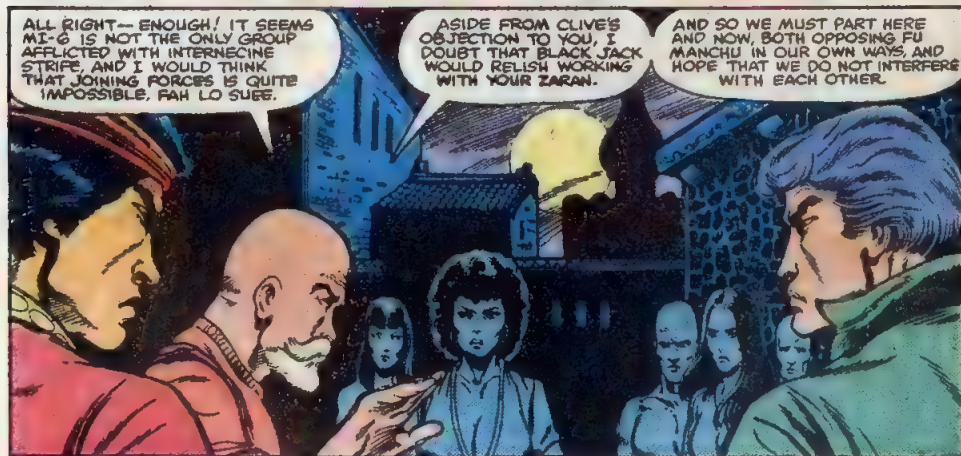
I OUGHT TO RIP YOU
APART RIGHT HERE
AND--

HOLD, RESTON!
SHE IS STILL
MY SISTER.



WHICH ONLY MAKES HER EVEN
MORE OF A WITCH! THAT WAS A
FILTHY CHEAP SHOT YOU TOOK
BACK AT THE CLUB, CHI. I WON'T
FORGET IT!

NOR WILL I
FORGET THAT YOU--



ALL RIGHT-- ENOUGH! IT SEEMS
MI-6 IS NOT THE ONLY GROUP
AFFLICTED WITH INTERNECINE
STRIFE, AND I WOULD THINK
THAT JOINING FORCES IS QUITE
IMPOSSIBLE, FAH LO SUEE.

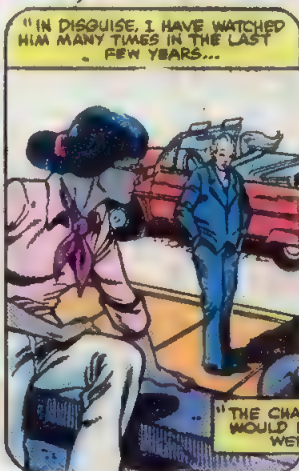
ASIDE FROM CLIVE'S
OBJECTION TO YOU, I
DOUBT THAT BLACK JACK
WOULD RELISH WORKING
WITH YOUR ZARAN.

AND SO WE MUST PART HERE
AND NOW, BOTH OPPOSING FU
MANCHU IN OUR OWN WAYS, AND
HOPE THAT WE DO NOT INTERFERE
WITH EACH OTHER.

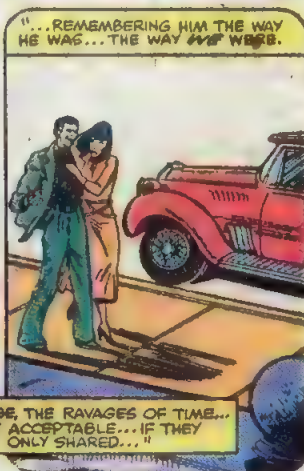


AND YOU, KARAMENAH?
WHEN THIS
IS OVER...
WILL YOU
WISH TO
CONTACT
PETRIE?

NO, NAYLAND.
NO, I'VE
TRIED..



"IN DISGUISE, I HAVE WATCHED
HIM MANY TIMES IN THE LAST
FEW YEARS...



"...REMEMBERING HIM THE WAY
HE WAS... THE WAY ~~WE~~ WE'RE.

"THE CHANGE, THE RAVAGES OF TIME...
WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE... IF THEY
WERE ONLY SHARED..."

BULLPEN BULLETINS

STAN'S SOAPBOX

You wouldn't believe it! Even I can hardly believe it! I've told you about a lot of nutty things here in the Soapbox, but this is probably the nuttiest!

Now, before you can appreciate the monstrous mix-up I'm gonna lay on you, you've gotta understand that three months go by between the time I write these wondrous words and the time you read them. In other words, this column which you're ecstatically reading right now is scheduled to appear in the mags that go on sale in the month of January, 1980. But I'm writing it on Sept. 30th, 1979! Got that? You and I, at this very moment, are separated by a three-month gap — or even a longer interval if you bought this issue "way after its original on-sale date" (The reason is, of course, that it takes about three months to get the magazines engraved, printed, and then shipped to your friendly

neighborhood magazine seller.)

Okay, so here's what happened. When I wrote last month's Soapbox, I wanted to make sure that everyone would have a chance to watch the new Captain America TV Special which was scheduled to be shown on CBS-TV early in January. Therefore, I told you all about it last issue. Well, just yesterday, (MY yesterday, not yours!) Sept. 20th, I learned that CBS is planning to move the date up and show Cap's new movie sometime in November, instead of January! But I'd just told you that it would be shown in January — and my column was already at the printer, too late to change it!

So now you know the reason why I wrote a heavy, emotional, enthusiastic message to you last ish, telling you not to miss Cap's second TV Special — telling you not to miss a show that had

already been broadcast one or two months earlier!!! But that's not the worst of it! Just imagine if CBS changes its mind and decides to reschedule the show for January or February or whatever! This column will already be at the printer, too late to change again, and I'll have to write another confusing, long-winded apology next month! Hey, Doc Doom — where are you with your time machine now that I need you?

Well, since you're probably as confused as I am by now, I figure it's time to end this little literary litany and turn to far more important matters, such as seeing if I can still remember how to spell the most mind-boggling salutation I all—

Excelsior!

Stan

Marvel Masterpieces on sale this month!

INCREDIBLE HULK #245 — The space-born Captain Marvel guest-stars as the Hulk returns to the world of his beloved, Jarella.

DEFENDERS #62 — The Hulk, Dr. Strange and Sub-Mariner face the dreaded Unsublime in the fantastic realm known as Tunnervorld!

SHOGUN WARRIORS #15 — Richard Carson is replaced by a villainous look-alike!

ROM #6 — ROM takes on a surprise villain! You've seen him before in the original Leif Eriksson Dr. Strange series!

MICRONAUTS #18 — The Fabulous Fantastic Four team up with the Micronauts to do battle with Psycho-Man!

FANTASTIC FOUR #217 — The Disco Dazzler does her guest-star thing. Plus the secret of Hecatia the robot revealed!

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA #18 — The trial of Star Lin!

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #205 — Spider and the Disco Dazzler team up against the terror known as Lightmaster!

MR. STRANGE #40 — The Master of the Mystic Arts fights for his life against Azzazel, the Angel of Death. Plus the villainy of Baron Mordo!

MARVEL TEAM-UP #62 — Spider-Man must rescue Ghost Rider from the clutches of Moondragon the Magician!

Sgt. Fury #157 — Re-presenting Sgt. Fury #61. The Howlers mission. Rescue Sam Sawyer from the Nazis — or die trying!

WHAT IF #20 — What if the Avengers had fought the Kree Skrull War without Rick Jones? An alternate reality that'll knock your socks off!

MARVEL TALES #114 — Re-presenting Amazing Spider-Man #137. The cataclysmic conclusion of Spider's battle with the re-born Green Goblin!

STAR TREK #1 — Humor time is over! At least — Mighty Marvel unleashes the first part of its awesome adaptation of the movie of the year. Quite possibly the most incredible space fantasy you'll ever read!

MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #62 — Counter-Earth is missing! And only the Thing and guest-star Moondragon can hope to find it!

CAPTAIN AMERICA #244 — Cap takes on the Amazing Adonis!

GHOST RIDER #43 — A sinister sorcerer separates Johnny Blaze from the Ghost Rider! You've got to read it to believe it!

AVENGERS #194 — A mystery villain! The secret of the man called Selbis! Plus: A behind-the-scenes peek at life in Avengers Mansion!

X-MEN #130 — "Signed down With the Hellfire Club!"

MARVEL FUN & GAMES #5 — Puzzles, mazes, and brain twisters galore as you match wits with the Bullpen's Best!

THOR #294 — Beginning this issue The Quest for the Ring of the Nibelung!

TALES TO ASTONISH #5 — Re-presenting Sub-Mariner #5. Enter Dr. Doctus and Tiger Shark!

FANTASY MASTERPIECES #5 — Re-presenting Silver Surfer #5. The Surfer takes on the dreaded Strange. Guest-starring the far-out Fantastic Four!

MARVEL SUPERACTION #18 — Repeating the never-to-be-forgotten first appearance of the Vision from AVENGERS #67

AMAZING ADVENTURES #5 — Re-presenting part one of X-Men #3 "Beware the Blob" Plus: The sensé-shattering conclusion of the origin of Cyclops!

MACHINE MAN #14 — You and Machine Man must unravel the mystery of "The Man Who Walked Through Walls!"

SAVAGE SHE-HULK #2 — She-Hulk! Wanted for Murder!

SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #41 — Spider-Man and Giant-Man team up against Venom-Man!

STAR WARS #34 — Epic space battle as the Star Warriors rush to destroy the Empire's demonic Omega Effect! "Thunder in The Stars!"

POWER MAN #62 — Luke Cage at the mercy of the Maggia — and only Iron Fist and Thunderbolt can save him!

MASTER OF KUNG FU #67 — Shang-Chi versus the agents of Fu Manchu in the legendary city of Crippleland!

CONAN #108 — Conan battles the savage "Sons of the Bear God!"

MARVEL'S GREATEST COMICS #67 — Re-presenting Fantastic Four #107. Red Cues Ben Grimm of being the Thing — or does he? Plus: The Villainy of Jarek!

MARVEL PREMIERE #53 — Starring the Black Panther. T'Challa uncovers the deadly secret of the Knights of the Dragon Circle!

SPIDER-WOMAN #25 — Spider-Woman becomes a criminal! How? Why? It's a shocker! ...

IRON MAN #133 — Iron Man is trapped by the most unexpected foe of all — his own invincible armor! Guest-starring Ant-Man!



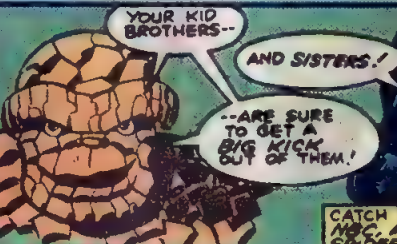
MARVEL MAGAZINES

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #60 — Part II of the novel "Conan the Conqueror!" by Robert E. Howard.

CRAZY #60 — The only thing that could be weirder than last month's Crazy — this month!

HOWARD THE DUCK #4 — Special Issue! Directed from Duckworth we proudly present... Playdough, the magazine for drakes. Featuring fantastic stories of a brave young fowl adrift in the impossible world of heartless apes. Plus the Playdough interview. Duckmatt of the Month and lots more in this once-in-a-duck-time issue!

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AND
THE THING



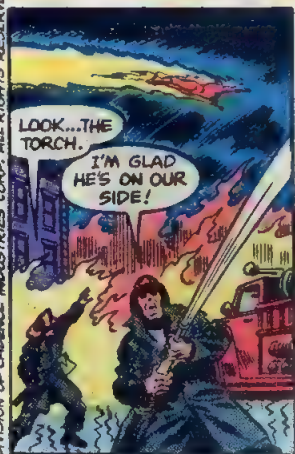
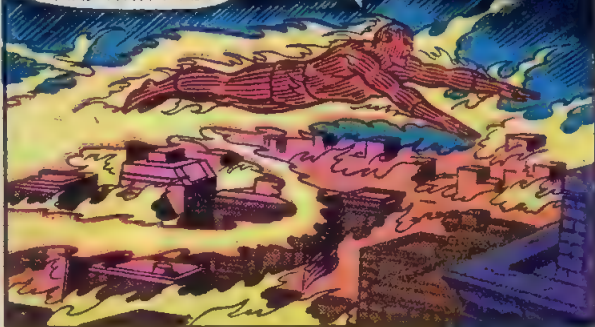
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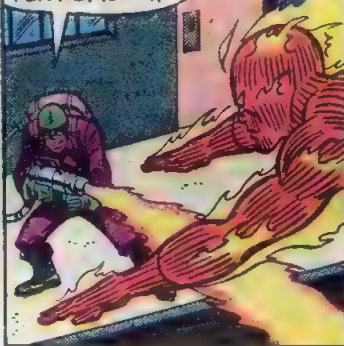


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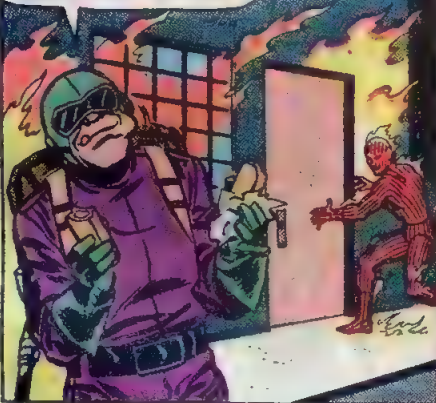
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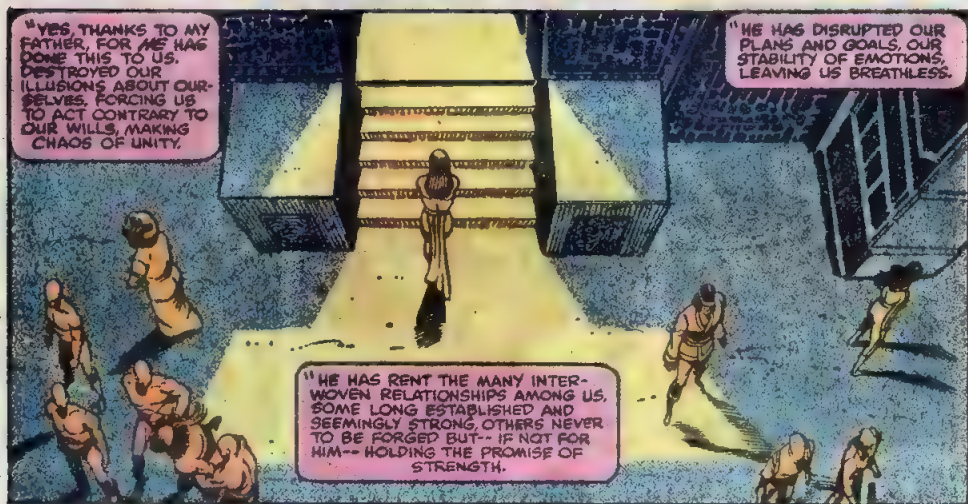
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NEXT: NEW YORK CITY-- AND THE MENACE OF MARU!

Dear Doug and Mike,

Back in the early sixties, I was introduced to comics at a very early age and it was an instant love affair. As I grew, my feelings for comics never diminished and I would often hear the question, "Why don't you write to the comics and tell them how you feel?" Finally, when I couldn't think of any more excuses, I began my semi-letterhack career in college.

But after letters to a few dozen publications, I was forced to temporarily lay off. The elements forcing that decision are too complex to go into here; suffice it to say that even real people face moments of decision in their lives.

As the crisis passed, and now out of college, I contemplated a second round of correspondence. But the questions I now heard had a much different ring. "Why in the world do you still read comicbooks?" With each passing month, that question became more and more difficult to answer. Nevertheless, I've come back.

But I've come back a lot angrier than ever before. I look at an industry where writers can't last a dozen issues on the same title, and the artists even fewer. I see more and more titles featuring the word "adult" in their come-ons, yet very rarely living up to the claim. I've watched as DC, once the world's greatest comics company, made decision after incredibly shortsighted decision, losing its number one status to Marvel, then progressively getting even worse. Finally, when it looked as if it were starting to shake itself out of lethargy, its line was gutted by the new owning corporation. These things make me furious.

So why am I choosing MASTER OF KUNG FU to voice my opinions? Because throughout its tenure, it's been a shining example of what comics can and should be. It's had relatively stable writer-artist teams. It is truly adult in its approach, with plenty of action to attract the younger set. And while it sprang from a trend, it has long outlasted the craze that spawned it.

Greatness in a series is not judged by a single episode, but by consistency. In the case of MOKF, Doug, you've achieved a level of greatness rarely seen in any medium.

In my first round of letter-writing, I wrote to get published. Now I'm writing because I care about an American institution that's given me a great deal of pleasure through the years. It's been a good friend and I'm not about to turn my back on it now. There are those who say that the only comics fans left are those in it for financial speculation, along with those crazy ones who live, eat, and breathe comics — the sharks and their victims. They're wrong, but it's easy to see how they got that idea.

I've written a lot of letters to a lot of titles. This one was for me, to remind me of why I even bother. It's art and imagination, wildly expressed. There's precious little of that left nowadays. In a field where the word "great" is often abused, I want to thank you, Doug, for a truly great series.

Larry Lisowski
8333 Chimney Rock #102
Houston, TX 77061

Dear Doug,

The usual song of praise, eh? Okay, all together now: MOKF #60 IS GREAT! YOU WRITE GOOD, ZECK DRAWS GOOD, DAY INKS GOOD; HURRAY FOR YOU!

In particular, your increasing interest in overlapping captions and sound effects, Zeck's delicate homage to all the overhead camera shots in the history of comics (did I say "delicate"?... I meant to say "ka-razy!"). Day's precision inking, and the return of the Si-Fan made this issue a joy to read.

No, I am not uncritical, never that, so can I mention the doubts I had? I doubted the reality of the opening scene wherein Chi listens to loud music and Tarr is uptight. Frankly, I felt like a set-up for the neat interchange between Tarr and Reston re: Chi's father... almost as if *that* bit (and it was clever!) came to you first and you had to find a scapegoat, a straight man, to play it out. Tarr was the obvious choice, of course, but I was surprised to see him acting like that. After all, the bloke does collect Fratzetta posters; he's not a total stranger to the outre manifestations of pop culture. So his outrage was *unexpected*, something that rarely happens in this series, where every character is

as real as you or me. Mind you, I'm not objecting to the change in Shang-Chi. That's okay; I sense it will form the basis for some interesting future events. It is the change in Tarr I find disconcerting. We do not need another Ben Grimm/Nick Fury type.

Otherwise the issue shines. The interludes are magnificent. You are exploring new territory here — at least I have never seen this technique used in such depth or with such consistency in comicbooks.

The plot deserves a paragraph, too. You seem to do best with hardcore spy/mystery storylines, ones which have been plotted well in advance and unfold with an economy of movement rarely seen in modern comics (more's the pity), and this one looks good so far.

As usual, I can only close by saying that MOKF is without a doubt the most interesting comic now being published. Keep it up, Doug; we are all waiting for the next issue... and the next... and the next...

Cat Yronwode
Rt. 1, Box 287

Willow Springs, MO 65793

As usual, Cat, thanks — but let's rebut your objections to Tarr's behavior. If indeed Tarr's reaction was unexpected (in a sour-note sense rather than merely surprising), then Doug did indeed hit the wrong key and he'll accept the rap — but he contends that the wrong key had nothing to do with Tarr's dislike of loud music. Indeed, Doug is always rather bemused when, after presenting a new side of a character (a trait he had always assumed implicitly but which had not been explicitly detailed), the reader resistance proves to be so strong — even from highly perceptive readers like you, Cat. It is as if the previously shown aspects of the character's personality constitute an absolute limit to further development. This line of thinking seems to dictate, for example, the following logic: We've never seen Tarr dislike heavy rock in the past, so he can't dislike it now. But why not? In the course of all the previous stories, Tarr has never had occasion to hear heavy rock, so where's the inconsistency?

Furthermore, we know many people who love Fratzetta and hate rock. The two are not necessarily indispensable adjuncts of one another.

Finally, the bit that "came to Doug first"... actually, the story needed an opening scene in which Chi is recovering from the previous issue's illness. Something passive. Meditation would've been fine, and entirely in character, but it had been done many times before. Why not add something to it, something that would both remain consistent with Chi's character and develop it further at the same time. Listening to music fit the bill perfectly — a natural "passive activity" for recuperation from illness. Now, Chi is obviously Doug's counterpart in certain ways — which is why Chi has previously gotten off on Fleetwood Mac, the only "new" rock group since Traffic that has truly excited Moch. But... time to take Chi a step further — into true rock. The Stones (and the Beatles in a more sublime way) have always been Doug's favorite group, and the Jagger line, "Make every song your favorite tune," has always struck him as being very zen-like, a sentiment to which Chi would naturally respond. And since Doug's father has always hated the Stones — with a crusty personality much like Tarr's — the rest came verbatim from past experience. The final "father-connection" fell into place on its own, quite serendipitously. After all, the next scene would deal heavily with Chi's father. So: The Tarr/Reston interchange was actually the last bit that came to Doug. How 'bout that, huh? And the next bit coming to you is the penultimate chapter of our current Fu Manchu saga, and it's a stunner. Be here!



204

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